36th Annual Report 2010 - 2011

Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer

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Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer

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Chair's Report

Honourable Greg Weadick
Minister of Advanced Education and Technology
324 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Weadick:

On behalf of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) and in accordance with ACAT's Mandate and Roles, I have the honour of providing you with the 36th ACAT Annual Report for the year ending March 31, 2011.

ACAT and Alberta's post-secondary institutions remain strongly committed to Alberta's Transfer System and the Campus Alberta objectives, as we work together to increase learner access and mobility within the advanced education system. This system collaboration is conducted in an effort to ensure a learner-centred Transfer System which provides learners flexible learning opportunities that support the vision of Campus Alberta. The Annual Report showcases Alberta post-secondary institutions willingness to cooperate and collaborate for the benefit of the learner.

Alberta's Transfer System is continuously growing - there are currently 31,155 active and 46,550 grand fathered transfer agreements contained in the Online Alberta Transfer Guide. The success and growth of transfer in Alberta is largely the result of the efforts of our network of Contact Persons which include a representative from each of the 36 post-secondary institutions.

To enhance existing collaborative relationships, ACAT has developed a new articulation committee model that allows for the expansion of the number of articulation committees in Alberta. Articulation Committees are an important mechanism for maintaining and enhancing collegial relationships between institutions which leads to greater integration within the Transfer System. In 2010 two new articulation committees following the new model were launched in English and Aboriginal Education.

ACAT continues its commitment to the development and enhancement of learner pathways which is reflected by the establishment of a Block Transfer Sub-committee. This Sub-committee will look to expand upon the opportunities and recommendations identified in the 2010 Environics Learner Progressions Final Report. The Sub-committee will work toward the development of best practices and models for block transfer.

In an effort to maintain Alberta's position as a national leader in student mobility ACAT continues to explore new and innovative approaches in transfer. With this goal at the forefront ACAT established a Learning Outcomes and Assessment Sub-committee which has begun the initial examination of a learning outcome approach to transfer. The Council's long term goal is the development of best practices and models for learning outcomes and assessment.

On behalf of ACAT, I would like to recognize the contribution of the post-secondary institutions that comprise Alberta's Transfer System as they continue to work to facilitate student mobility. I would also like to thank the ministry for the support by the Secretariat and the department. I look forward to ensuring that ACAT continues to be an important cornerstone of Campus Alberta.

Sincerely,

Ron Woodward
Chair

ACAT Council Members

Name	Position	Institution
Mr. Ronald (Ron) Woodward	ACAT Chair	Council Chair
Mr. David Aldrich	Vice President, Student Experience and Admissions	Alberta College of Art and Design
Dr. Robert Boudreau	Associate Vice President, Academic	University of Lethbridge
Dr. Paula Burns	Provost and Vice-President Academic	NAIT
Dr. Tracy Edwards	President and CEO	Lethbridge College
Dr. Robin Fisher	Provost and Vice President, Academic	Mount Royal University
Ms. Anna Kae Todd	Vice President, Learning Services	Bow Valley College
Dr. Dietmar Kennepohl	Associate Vice President, Academic	Athabasca University
Mr. Vincent Steinhauer	Faculty Member	Blue Quills First Nations College
Dr. Jonathan Strand	Associate Vice President, Student Services	Concordia University College of Alberta
Dr. Colleen Skidmore	Vice-Provost (Academic)	University of Alberta
Mrs. Ann Tierney	Vice-Provost (Students)	University of Calgary
Ms. Alice Wainwright-Stewart	Vice President, Academic, Innovation and Research	Lakeland College
Mr. Alastair MacKinnon	Student Representative	Council of Alberta University Students
Ms. Tessa Cocchio	Student Representative	Alberta Students Executive Council
Mr. Larry Hlushak	Public Member	Public
Ms. Joan Engel	Director-Arts, Communications, Citizenship, Mathematics and Sciences	Alberta Education
Mr. Dan Rizzoli	Executive Director, Campus Alberta Partnerships	Alberta Advanced Education and Technology
Ms. Janice Park	Director ACAT Secretariat	Alberta Advanced Education and Technology

ACAT Strategic Direction 2010 - 2011

Vision

Alberta's post-secondary institutions work co-operatively to provide a transfer system that is responsive to the needs of learners in the matters of admissions, transfer credit, and recognition of prior learning.

Mission

The mission of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) is to be a catalyst for beneficial change and an advocate for learners in the areas of post-secondary admission and transfer throughout Campus Alberta. ACAT provides leadership and direction, as a cornerstone of Campus Alberta, in the improvement of educational opportunities for Alberta students through inter-institutional transfer. ACAT is committed to supporting and improving communication among Alberta post-secondary institutions and to promoting the advantages of a system of education, with all that this means for educational planning for the benefit of learners.

ACAT also plays an active role in the implementation of policies through monitoring, facilitation, and research. Council is responsible for facilitating improvement in relationship development and communication among all institutions regarding issues of admission and transfer credit.

To fulfill its mission, ACAT is engaged in the following activities:

Leadership
- Including the formation of best practices, and procedures within which effective transitions and prior learning assessment and recognition are supported

Communication
- Including continuous improvement of communication on matters of admissions and transfers

Publications:
- Including a Business Plan, Newsletters, and the annual Transfer Patterns Report.
- Maintenance of the *official Online Alberta Transfer Guide* and the production and distribution of the printed annual *Alberta Transfer Guide*

Mediation:
- Serving the best interests of learners

Applied Research:
- Relating to the admission and transfer of learners throughout the Alberta Transfer System
- Participating in Pan-Canadian research projects

Highlights from Strategic Priorities

ACAT has identified strategic priorities to respond to the significant opportunities and challenges to achieve its goals and strategies for 2010-2013.

The strategic priorities described below were identified as key tasks for Council over the past year, in addition to the important ongoing core businesses of ACAT.

Alignment with Campus Alberta

As a body, whose representation is broader than Alberta's six-sector model, ACAT is uniquely poised to further the vision of Campus Alberta. ACAT's membership includes all public post-secondary institutions, including some Aboriginal colleges.

October 28, 2010 marked the first convening of the ACAT Council under its new competency based model which aligned with the requirements of the pending Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act. In keeping with the Campus Alberta vision, Council representation spans the post-secondary sectors and aboriginal institutions. Council membership also includes student and public representatives.

Increasing Block Transfer Opportunities

As Alberta's post-secondary system evolves and learners look for new pathways to pursue their lifelong learning ACAT is seeking to broaden block transfer opportunities.

ACAT Strategic Direction 2010 - 2011

At the October 2010 Council meeting a Block Transfer Sub-committee was struck to explore the expansion of block transfer in Alberta building upon the Environics Research Group's Learner Progression Report on career laddering and block transfer. The Sub-committee is looking to address and capitalize on the challenges and recommendations identified in the Final Report.

Articulation Committees

The Alberta Transfer System is built upon collegial, collaborative relationships between post-secondary institutions. Articulation committees are viewed as integral mechanisms in enhancing the collaborative environment in Alberta. These committees see program heads, faculty members and Alberta Education representatives, in a given area of study, come together to exchange information and discuss issues related to admissions and transfer.

To further expand the number of articulation committees ACAT established an Articulation Sub-committee to develop a new articulation committee model that would support the expansion of articulation committees and implement pilots of this new committee model.

In September 2010 pilot articulation committees following the new model were launched in English and Aboriginal Education. With the successful launch of these committees ACAT's Articulation Sub-committee is examining further expansion into the areas of Child and Youth Care and Business in 2011.

Collaborative Development of Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Over the past two years ACAT has examined European learning outcome based frameworks, the Bologna and Copenhagen initiatives, which are designed to promote mutual trust, transparency and recognition of competencies and qualifications to support increased mobility between post-secondary institutions within and across borders.

Within the context of these frameworks, learning outcomes describe what a learner is expected to know, understand, and be able to do after the successful completion of their studies.

Examination of these European models have offered ACAT insight and represent the first step towards the measured and careful migration of Alberta's Transfer System to an outcomes based system.

To build upon this initial work a Learning Outcomes and Assessment Sub-committee was established at the October 2010 Council meeting. This sub-committee will undertake work to develop best practices and models for learning outcomes and assessment recognizing that this work is evolutionary in nature and will be achieved over time.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

Implementation of the *PLAR Action Plan* has been extended to March 2013. During this past year, PLAR workshops and courses have been offered in Alberta, work to develop a PLAR manual and website has begun, and research into the issue relating to transcription and portability of PLAR credits has been conducted.

National Leadership

As a leader in admissions and transfer, ACAT continues to promote the excellence of Alberta's Transfer System, recognize student mobility, and continues to work with other jurisdictions in Canada through participation in bodies such as the Council of Ministers of Education Canada Working Group on Credit Transfer, the Western Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (WestCAT) and the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

ACAT participated in the PCCAT Annual General Meeting in June, 2010 in Vancouver, British Columbia. At the 2010 meeting, ACAT Chair, Mr. Ron Woodward, assumed the role of Western Co-Chair of PCCAT.

ACAT Strategic Direction 2010 - 2011

Additionally, ACAT is a member of WestCAT which examines interprovincial transfer and student mobility between institutions in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Further supporting and promoting interprovincial transfer, Council acclaimed its ACAT Membership Sub-committee recommendation to accept Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning (TRU-OL) as the Alberta Transfer System's newest member.

TRU-OL is the first British Columbia based institution to become a member of Alberta's System following ACAT's adoption of the British Columbia Institution Policy which allows degree granting members of the British Columbia Transfer System to apply for membership.

Goals and Accomplishments

Core Business One
Admission

Admission practices and policies at post-secondary institutions are clearly articulated.

Goal 1 Facilitate the development and maintenance of fair and equitable admission practices and policies at post-secondary institutions.

Outcomes

1.1 Students make smooth transitions from secondary to post-secondary and post-secondary to post-secondary studies.

1.2 Students have improved access to information on admission policies at institutions.

Accomplishments

Outcome 1.1

- Continued to work with the secondary to post-secondary Second Languages articulation committee.
- Published the post-secondary admissions requirements for the new secondary Mathematics curriculum.
- Developed a new articulation model to aid in the expansion of articulation committees in Alberta.
- Piloted new articulation committee model in English and Aboriginal Education.
- Continued post-secondary to post-secondary articulation meetings in Computing Science, Biological Sciences and Engineering.
- Continued to consult with the Provincial Academic Upgrading Coordinators and published charts outlining acceptance of upgrading courses for admission to post-secondary programs.

Outcome 1.2

- Strategic work with Institutions has commenced.
- Transfer Alberta provides learners access to admissions information on the ALIS website.

Goals and Accomplishments

Core Business Two
Transfer

Facilitate agreements among post-secondary institutions to acknowledge and recognize appropriate previous learning experience.

Goal 2 Learners receive appropriate educational credit as they transfer from one Alberta program to another.

Outcomes

2.1 The student transfer system is effective and efficient.

2.2 Continue the implementation of the Advanced Education and Technology's *PLAR Action Plan*

Accomplishments

Outcome 2.1

- Updated the *Online Alberta Transfer Guide* daily and published the hard copy *Alberta Transfer Guide*.
- Witnessed the number of active transfer agreements grow to 31,155 and grandfathered to 46,550 with the total number of agreements now reaching 77,705 and representing an 3% increase.
- Published the Graduate Outcomes Survey: Transfer report on the Transfer Alberta on the Transfer Alberta website which is highlighted by a 91% satisfaction with the transfer credit received.
- Provided training and orientation sessions to post-secondary institution representatives.
- Worked with Information and Technology Management representatives concerning performance and functionality of the ACAT Transfer Agreement Archival and Retrieval System (TAARS).
- Alberta "Members in good Standing" reports were provided to ACAT's 36 member institutions in 2010.

Outcome 2.2

- Ensured ongoing consultation with the PLAR Stakeholder Committee on activities related to the implementation of the *PLAR Action Plan*.
- Offered the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology's (SIAST) courses and workshops to Alberta post secondary institution faculty and staff.
- Research into the transcription and portability of PLAR credits has begun, with the goal of reducing the barriers students may face after being awarded PLAR credits.
- Development of a PLAR manual and a PLAR website has begun and will be released in the fall 2011.

Goals and Accomplishments

Core Business Three
Communication

Ensure that learners and other stakeholders have timely and accurate information about institutions' admission requirements and course and program transfer options.

Goal 3

Learners have access to current, accurate information on admissions and transfer policies as well as course and program transfer opportunities, and are aware of the benefits of the admissions and transfer system.

Outcomes

3.1 Information to assist high school and potential transfer students is available.

3.2 Albertans are aware of the benefits of our admissions and transfer system.

Accomplishments

Outcome 3.1

- Continued to work with post-secondary institutional partners to annually compile all transfer agreements within the *On-Line Alberta Transfer Guide* and the *Alberta Transfer Guide*.
- Promoted the *Alberta Transfer Guide* through the *Learning Clicks* program and promotion at conferences and transfer fairs.
- Worked with the keepers of the *Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS website)* as a portal to www.transferalberta.ca.
- Continued to provide the Transfer Infoline services to learners and institutions by responding to approximately 203 phone calls and 153 e-mail inquiries.

Outcome 3.2

- Delivered presentations to various groups including Learning Clicks Youth and Parent Ambassadors, Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS), Alberta Student's Executive Council (ASEC) members.

Goals and Accomplishments

Core Business Four
Influence

Influence policy related to admissions and transfer issues including: assisting and advising other jurisdictions about the procedures for and benefits of establishing and maintaining an efficient and effective admissions and transfer system; and providing a forum for inter-institutional discussion of admissions and transfer issues.

Goal 4 ACAT influences policy decisions related to the admissions and transfer system and serves as a model for other jurisdictions.

Outcomes

4.1 ACAT demonstrates a leadership role in enhancing the concept of Campus Alberta while at the same time ensuring that a learner-centred approach is at the forefront.

4.2 Reinforce ACAT as the representative voice in policy development for the advanced education system on items related to Alberta admissions and transfer.

4.3 Provide advice and assistance to promote inter-provincial portability of courses and programs.

Accomplishments

Outcome 4.1

- New ACAT council members recruited to meet the requirements of the competency based governance model.
- Established a Block Transfer Sub-committee to develop best practices and models for block transfer in Alberta.
- Established a Learning Outcomes and Assessment Sub-committee to develop best practices and models for learning outcomes and assessment.
- Continued work on transfer issues such as instructor qualifications.

Outcome 4.2

- Continued to provide an opportunity for round-table discussions of institutional issues at ACAT meetings.
- Invited the host institution for ACAT meetings to participate and discuss admissions and transfer issues at their institution.
- Coordinated the annual Contact Persons' meeting where 60 institution and ACAT representatives dialogued about key transfer issues, and identified opportunities for continuous improvement.
- ACAT Chair visited 12 member institutions to discuss issues, opportunities, and challenges.

Outcome 4.3

- Thompson Rivers University- Open Learning accepted as a member of the Alberta Transfer System following the British Columbia Institution policy which allows degree granting institutions from British Columbia to apply for membership in the Alberta Transfer System.

Outcome 4.3 Continued...

- Hosted the October 1, 2010 meeting of the Western Consortium on Admissions and Transfer, which brought representatives from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba together to discuss admissions and student mobility issues between jurisdictions.
- ACAT Director and Manager attended the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT) Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Vancouver, British Columbia June 2010.
- ACAT Chair named the 2010 PCCAT Western Co-Chair at the June 2010 meeting.
- Supported a culture of interprovincial transfer with the ACAT Director chairing the CMEC Credit Transfer Working Group and by participating in the PCCAT and WestCAT research projects.

ALBERTA TRANSFER SYSTEM MEMBERS

Post-Secondary Institution	Telephone	Website
Alberta College of Art + Design	1-800-251-8290	www.acad.ca
Ambrose University College	1-800-461-1222	www.ambrose.edu
Athabasca University	1-800-788-9041	www.athabascau.ca
Aurora College	1-866-266-4966	www.auroracollege.nt.ca
The Banff Centre	1-800-565-9989	www.banffcentre.ca
Blue Quills First Nations College	1-888-645-4455	www.bluequills.ca
Bow Valley College	1-866-428-2669	www.bowvalleycollege.ca
Canadian University College	1-800-661-8129	www.cauc.ca
Concordia University College of Alberta	1-866-479-5200	www.concordia.ab.ca
DeVry Institute of Technology- Calgary	1-800-363-5558	www.devry.edu/calgary
Grande Prairie Regional College	1-888-539-4772	www.gprc.ab.ca
Grant MacEwan University	1-888-497-4622	www.macewan.ca
Keyano College	1-800-251-1408	www.keyano.ca
The King's University College	1-800-661-8582	www.kingsu.ca
Lakeland College	1-800-661-6490	www.lakelandcollege.ca
Letbridge College	1-800-578-0103	www.lethbridgecollege.ca
Maskwachees Cultural College	(780) 585-3925	www.maskwachees.ca
Medicine Hat College	(403) 529-3819	www.mhc.ab.ca
Mount Royal University	(403) 440-5000	www.mtroyal.ca
NorQuest College	(780) 644-6000	www.norquest.ca
NAIT	(780) 471-6248	www.nait.ca
Northern Lakes College	1-866-652-3456	www.northernlakescollege.ca
Nunavut Arctic College	1-866-979-7222	www.nac.nu.ca
Olds College	1-800-661-6537	www.oldscollege.ca
Portage College	1-866-623-5551	www.portagecollege.ca
Prairie Bible College	1-800-661-2425	www.prairie.edu
Red Crow Community College	1-866-937-2400	www.redcrowcollege.com
Red Deer College	(403) 342-3300	www.rdc.ab.ca
Rocky Mountain College	1-877-968-6762	www.rockymountaincollege.ca
SAIT Polytechnic	1-877-284-7248	www.sait.ca
St. Mary's University College	(403) 531-9130	www.stmu.ab.ca
Taylor College & Seminary	1-800-567-4988	www.taylor-edu.ca
Thompson Rivers University- Open Learning	1-800-663-9711	www.tru.ca/distance
University of Alberta	(780) 492-3113	www.ualberta.ca
University of Calgary	(403) 210-7625	www.ucalgary.ca
University of Lethbridge	(403) 320-5700	www.uleth.ca
Yellowhead Tribal College	1-877-982-3382	www.ytced.ab.ca